ADDICTED TO LOVE

Intravenously most certainly conjures up images of drugs and addiction. Here are two stories from the Glaswegian which explore addictive personalities and their relationships with love. The first piece seeks to explain Avon’s increasingly destructive and psychotic behavior as a function of the drugs he uses. The reader will admit, we think, that in the series Avon always appeared as someone who could very easily be a drug user. The second story has a somewhat lighter tone to it. Addiction is not always dependent on substances we inject or ingest...

MIST
M. FAE GLASGOW

It glinted in the light, a thing of beauty, a joy that lasted somewhat less than forever. Avon turned it over and over, the prismatic gleam from it colouring his fingertips with a lingering, dreaming glow.

Vila muttered from the untidiness of the bed, sprawled in chaos equal to that of the sheets and duvet, his words barely audible. “Hate that stuff, I do.”

“A fact, which, like you, is of monumental unimportance. After all, you aren’t the one who…indulges, are you now?”

“No, but I’m the one who has to sit here and watch you commit suicide, drop by bloody drop.”

Avon’s fist clenched around the sharp corners of the cube, the edges biting into him, just like Vila’s old argument. He turned his back on both the man and his words. “We,” he said, waving the tattered banner of his forbearance, “have gone over this before. Repeatedly.”

“Yeh, an’ the truth’s still the same. That stuff, Avon…Look, I’ve seen sights I hope you’ll never even be able to imagine, I know what that bloody drug does to a man.”

“And I have already explained to you, idiot, that I am not a weakling like your service grade cronies, and so can hardly become addicted. I, not the drug, am in control here.”

“Oh yeh?” Vila sneered, gaze solid and harsh, digging a grave in Avon’s back. “That’s what they all said as well. But Twilight gets you, Avon, lulls you along, convinces you you don’t need it, until one day, a month after you take it or ten bloody years later, you waken up one morning and find you can’t live without it.” His words were obviously falling on barren ground, the seeds of truth left unplanted. “Avon,” he tried again, dragging out the argument, too afraid of the future Twilight would bring to back down from Avon as his common sense dictated. His tongue drifted off into silence for a moment while he marshalled his arguments, poor soldiers though they were. “Look, it’s a derivative of Shadow, and you know what that does. You’ve sat there, eating your dinner, watching the news, seeing the victims, just like the rest of us. But Twilight is just as bad as the other bloody drug, in its own way. After a while, the need starts burning up your insides, then the paranoia and psychosis set in…”

“Vila.” The soft word dropped like a stone into the flow of Vila’s words, stilling them, the clenched calm drowning out the sense of what was being said. “What?” Vila asked, prudently cautious. “I am not about to become a psychopath, nor am I about to become addicted to this. Now, I have heard more than enough on the subject, let it drop before I drop you.” He glowered over his shoulder at Vila, making sure his point was well taken. “From the nearest airlock.”

Vila subsided, worrying his hair with restless fingers, mind shuffling ideas to find the ace that would convince Avon to give up the filthy drug. He rose to his feet, not bothering with coverings, modesty in him an unnecessary encumbrance in this room. Standing quietly behind Avon, he peered over the pale shoulder, at the hands moving with slow grace, performing the ritual dance of habit. His groin brushed the towel wrapped around Avon’s waist, the towel used to hide vulnerability from Vila’s sight, the silent, symbolic barrier between them. Reluctantly, he brought his hand round to cover Avon’s, his own fingers shaking at his temerity, daring to bring the taint of emotion into their sexual arrangement.

“C’mon, Avon,” he whispered, “don’t. Don’t do
this to yourself an’ me. Don’t hurt yourself like this.”

An angry twist of Avon’s wrist, and his hand was once again free. “I’m warning you, Vila, you are seriously trying my patience. I suggest you get out while you can still walk out.”

“I can’t just keep my mouth shut about this, Avon! I can see what it’s going to do to you, what it’s doing already. C’mon, give it up.”

Avon snapped round to face Vila, his mouth a furious smear scarring his face. “I don’t try to stop you from your drinking, so don’t try to stop me from taking drugs.” His hand dug cruelly into Vila’s neck as he forced silence. “You are hardly in a position to preach, are you now, you drunken little sot. So shut up and get out.”

The hand clenched around Vila’s throat opened, the tremble barely apparent, not even noticeable when Avon brushed past Vila and into the bathroom. As the door closed behind him, the last glimpse Vila had was the seraphic glint of the crystalline cube, waiting to give temporary cure to that nervous tremble. Despondent, Vila gathered his clothes in sullen silence and went off to drown himself in a bottle of his own hypocrisy.

As life wound its way through the passage of time, the tremor in Avon’s hands came more often, now, the nervous dusting of palms more frequent, always, invariably followed by a silent retreat from the presence of others. And that, always, invariably followed by a summonsing of Vila to Avon’s cabin. Today, just as usual, regular as clockwork…

In front of Vila’s carefully inscrutable face, the door opened smoothly, the room it unclothed bright and busy. Shelves lined the walls, electronic and mechanical components lined the shelves, tools stacked precisely in pristine white storage bins tucked neatly under the shelves. No art, no change in the original décor, only the pristine white storage bins tucked neatly under the shelves.

Avon climbed in, not yet looking at Avon. His muscles were taut, his fists clenched tightly in his whitened fists. “Over!” he groaned, pushing and pulling, stroking and vibrating, darting from one point to the next. 

turning around to see Avon leaning on the doorjamb, Vila unfastened his clothes, folding them methodically, placing them on the chair in front of the computer console, turning off all the lights. The pillows tumbled onto the floor, leaving room for two in the non-standard bed, and he climbed in, not yet looking at Avon. His muscles were limned in the light still glowing from the bathroom, shadows and planes dignifying his face, glimmering on his hair. Then even that light was dimmed, leaving only the anonymous darkness and the faint sounds of Avon crossing the room, coming closer. The bed dipped, smooth skin slid the length of Vila’s, cold feet touched his briefly, and then the body was on top of him, beginning its slow undulation, its quiet climb to erection.

Knowing what was required of him, Vila wrapped his arms around Avon’s back, stealing a caress for himself, to add to his sensations and feed his own needs. Avon would feed and in fact, banquet, Vila’s physical needs, but emotionally, he would be left in famine, apart from his stolen morsels. He hardened under Avon’s body, feeling the echo against him, hearing it in the raggedness of Avon’s breathing.

Now, the kissing would start, now, at this moment when inhibitions were sloughed off like water from a seal, now that Avon was too far gone to particularly care what was—or was not—revealed in this brief freedom from masks and class and fear. It was almost impossible, even for Avon, to fear one who was so obviously besotted and held in thrall.

And so the kissing continued, tongues pressing and pushing, stroking and vibrating, darting from one home to visit another. Even lost within Avon’s arms, a part of Vila yet awaited the moment of truth, that killing instant when Avon, poised on the brink of from masks and class and fear. It was almost impossible, even for Avon, to fear one who was so obviously besotted and held in thrall.

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And so the kissing continued, tongues pressing and pushing, stroking and vibrating, darting from one home to visit another. Even lost within Avon’s arms, a part of Vila yet awaited the moment of truth, that killing instant when Avon, poised on the brink of completely losing control, teetering on the edge of giving sway to unrestrained, revelatory,emasculating passion would abruptly stutter, tension pushing the mindlessness of lust from his limbs. A sudden check in the midst of an embrace, a fragment of stillness, and then, again, as always, as it had to be every eviscerating time, Avon pulled himself back from the precipice and then the coldness descended once more.

“Over,” Avon said, hoarse and rough, control clenched tightly in his whitened fists. “Over!” he groaned, dumping Vila over onto his stomach, hand scrabbling on the bedside table.

Vila heard the vague click of nails on the hard plastic surface, heard the softer wisp of the loved and hated tube being grasped, felt the first chill of lotion on him. He bit his tongue to dam the words inside, where they could be held incommunicado and suffocated, as Avon wanted
himself for his foolish hopes and stupid dreams. And so it went, tonight no different from any other, time after dispiriting time, the hint of caring always withheld at the last moment, the rift unfurled and both men left holding nothing more than chiffon cloaks of self-respect.

And as he was lying there this time, after another of those times, Vila was further than ever from making Avon open to him. He faced the bathroom door, thinking about the future horrors thundering down towards him, borne on Twilight. Fear lent him courage and he opened the door, unveiling the sight of Avon, nude, the crystal cube poised above the surging artery in his arm, a look of coiled anticipation poised on his face.

“Been thinking about what you said, Avon.”

“Well, that’s an event certainly worth immortalising in song.” The cube was still held, the Twilight still encased.

“You’re probably right, of course. I mean, you’re always right, so why should you be wrong about this, eh? But you know, you never can tell what space travel will do to a person, can you? Look at that plague thing, that time we met your old friend Tynus. Wouldn’t ‘ve affected us, if we hadn’t all been gallivanting all over the galaxy, would it?”

“Get to the point, Vila. As you can see, I have something far more pleasurable to do than listen to your endless babble.” But he didn’t touch the crystal to his arm, as if the small whisperings at the back of his mind were making him wait his own well-stifled conscience hungry to follow if Vila had a way out of this maze of drugs and dependency.

“All I’m saying is, why don’t you try something else while Orac does some checking to see if Twilight’s all right. I mean, it wouldn’t be that hard for you. As you keep on saying, you can give Twilight up any time you want to. Without even trying.”

Avon quirked a smile at him, his unpredictable funny bone tickled by the sight of Vila coming right out. And as he was lying there this time, after another of those times, Vila was further than ever from making Avon open to him. He faced the bathroom door, thinking about the future horrors thundering down towards him, borne on Twilight. Fear lent him courage and he opened the door, unveiling the sight of Avon, nude, the crystal cube poised above the surging artery in his arm, a look of coiled anticipation poised on his face.

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Avon quirked a smile at him, his unpredictable funny bone tickled by the sight of Vila coming right out and challenging him in precisely the way one well-bred Alpha would call another out. “And of course, if I should refuse to give in to your ignorant fears, you would be able to say that that’s not what this little contretemps is all about, that it has nothing to do with me proving that I am neither addicted nor afraid of backing down from anyone, even a dismal Delta, that this whole stupid scenario is purely and simply for the good of my health. And so, no matter what, I have to give Twilight up, either for my physical well-being or for the sake of my pride. Well now, that’s actually quite a clever piece of manoeuvring. For a one cell amœba, that is.”

“But you’ll do it, won’t you?”

A larger smile this time, more dangerous, less amused than the first. “Why should I?”

“Why not?”

“And what would you, from your vast store of
knowledge and experience, suggest I take in its place?”

Vila forced his own smile deep into the back of his mind. Now was not the time to feel the sweet surge of elation. Time for that when Avon had given Twilight up for good—and succumbed instead to the delights of the mist of luxuriating in his emotions and the Mist-inspired passions. “Well,” he said, pondering heavily, making a great show of his deliberations, not deceiving Avon for one second, “there is this stuff I’ve heard about… Has pretty well the same effect as Twilight, but it was developed on one of the space cities, so we know it’s all right for space travellers.”

“Almost the same effects?”

“Yeh, almost. It’s euphoric, and intellect-focussing, and an energy booster, not to mention an incredible aphrodisiac—perfect for a man in leather, when you think about it. It’s even mind-expanding, does the whole lot of stuff Twilight does.”

“And?”

“And what?”

“You said that it has ‘pretty well’ the same effects. What’s the difference?”

“Oh, the difference, yes, well…” Vila hesitated, his courage diminishing at a speed of knots. “Well…” He glanced up, but Avon was still staring at him, implacable. “It sort of…” In mute demand, the crystal barely touched Avon’s skin, not quite enough to start the osmosis. Not quite. Vila blurted the words out. “It’s an anti-inhibitant.”

And Avon laughed, unrestrainedly, delightedly.

“Is that all? And that is what you were so afraid to tell me. Oh, Vila, what an idiot you are if you think that there are any inhibitions I have yet to lose, or anything I haven’t tried at least once. Usually twice. I am,” he put the cube carefully down on the bathroom vanity bar, “after all,” he stroked a single fingernail from Vila’s lips all the way down his chest, onto his abdomen, through the thick curls of pubic hair, down the length of flushed velvet cock, stopping only when the fingertip dallied in the slit there, “a decadent Alpha-élite, one of the sybaritic few.”

Stock still, Vila’s body quivered faintly under the rare sensuous assault. He held his tongue, knowing he was courting disaster, but unwilling to tell Avon the full truth. Yes, Mist lowered all inhibitions and yes, when behind firmly closed and locked doors, Avon had already lost all of his. Sexually speaking, that is. Emotionally, however… And that was Mist’s secret. The removal, brick by brick, or whole walls at a time, of all the emotional traps and barriers and blinds that people build to keep them safe. To keep them bastioned away from those who would love them. In this specific, painful instance, to keep Avon shut away from Vila. And so, Vila left the words unsaid, gambling, as he always did, turning his life on the roll of the dice. He stood before Avon, naked, eyes closed, barricading both hopes and fears away from predatory perceptiveness.

“And you,” the voice broke into him, startling him with its calm, “I presume, have some of this…Mist?”

“Well, funny you should mention that…I just happened to pick some up when we were on Space City. Can get it for you, if you want.”

“Why not? Well? What are you waiting for? I thought you were anxious to save me from myself, from my dread addiction.”

“Not from addiction, Avon. From what I’ve seen Twilight do.”

“You are being tiresome, Vila. Just shut up and get me this Mist. And hurry, or I shall simply indulge myself with my usual…poison.” Unnervingly, he lounged, un-Avonishly, against the doorframe, watching Vila scramble into clothes, all the while indolently stroking his body, fingers catching in the black curls at his groin—a picture guaranteed to make Vila hurry enough to outrun a plasma bolt. His own need went unacknowledged: Avon did not choose to see his own haste, his own desperation. He was, after all, not addicted, still in complete control, beyond the feeble grip of the Shadow derivative. He was still there, fingers rapping—from impatience, he re-assured himself, not withdrawal—on the doorjamb, when Vila returned, rumpled and harried, a pale grey case in his hands.

“There you go, Avon. Mist, and plenty of it. You know what they say, a change is as good as a rest, and this stuff is quite a change, all that rest’ll really get you going. Aphrodisiac, you know. Not that you need it for that, of course, but…” He obeyed Avon’s glare and shut up, almost biting his runaway tongue in his haste.

With a slightly abstracted mask of mild interest on his face, Avon took the plush case, stroking one finger down its length, rather the way he did with Vila. He was acutely aware of the eyes watching him with veiled anticipation and fervid hope, as he unclasped the box, his own breath catching as the phials within were touched by light. They were vaguely cylindrical, vaguely grey, vaguely membranous, and wholly mysterious, seducing the intellect as quickly as the body. With delicate precision, Avon lifted one from its niche, holding this one to the light, watching as the phial drifted in gravity, becoming a teardrop, silken grey fluid twisting and turning in an endless Möbius strip of tantalising delight. He looked at his own personal Lorelei and smiled. “Now this does look interesting. Certainly worth trying. Care to watch?” Vila’s face brightened at the invitation, only to be wiped clean almost immediately. “After all,” the rich voice continued, “this is an aphrodisiac, and you could certainly make yourself useful, couldn’t you?”

He took a moment to read the insert, then put the case in the wall niche above his computer, nestling it cosily in with his twinkling pyramid of Twilight. Back turned to Vila, he lifted the Mist to his mouth, letting the skin of the phial dissolve on his tongue, waiting for the
elation to flood through his body.

Several moments of silence passed, as Vila stood passively watching Avon, clenching his fists against the desire to touch the rippling back muscles. He imagined he could see the drug surge through Avon, could see as it travelled the pathways of his nerves, flaring up in unnatural pleasure. Motionless, he stood before the door, trying to think, trying only to anticipate the coming moments. Before him, a sudden rush of sexual heat blushed ral pleasure. Motionless, he stood before the door, trying to see the drug surge through Avon, could see as it surged through Avon's skin, and Vila felt desire colour his own, felt the heat gather and pool in his groin, lengthening and filling and hardening his cock. With Avon still turning the blank façade of his back to him, he stripped, dumping his clothes at his feet, air warm on his bared skin, tingling over the hair of his groin. He drank in the sight of Avon, pale skin pinked, buttocks clenching and unclenching, back muscles flexing. Patiendly, knowing his reward would be heaven, Vila waited.

Eventually, Avon turned to face him, displaying an arousal as adamant as Vila's, the rosy cock lifted high, the foreskin slid back to frame his cockhead. He glanced down at his own enthusiasm, looked at Vila's, then met Vila's eyes.

And smiled.

A full, warm smile, overflowing with affection and desire, kindling a bonfire in Vila's belly, the heat erupting into his cock. Avon quirked an eyebrow as Vila's cock surged. "I thought I was the one who had taken what amounts to an aphrodisiac, Vila. Really, your…rampant enthusiasm commends you. Now," he whispered, lowering his voice, hand reaching out, "that looks somewhat uncomfortable, standing there all alone. Why don't we go to bed and find it some company, hmm?" And he stroked a single fingernail, shiveringly, down the length of Vila's cock, as a kite on Avon's drug, as affected by Mist as Avon himself was. All his own barriers went down, knocked for six, unleashing all his carefully chained in needs and hopes.

Hands stroked him, the grip firm and sure and supple, squeezing his cock, bringing him on, closer and closer to orgasm, only to withdraw suddenly, leaving his cock flat against his belly, precum oozing. "Avon!"

"Yes, Vila?" Breath whispered warmly into his ear, frissoning up and down his spine.

"Don't stop now, you bastard, c'mon, Avon, do me…"

The soft pad of a finger slid along him, making him writhe and mutter. "Oh, I fully intend to, no need to fret. However, a quick…'wank' is not quite what I had in mind. Spread your legs, Vila. Open up for me, that's it, lift them apart, joining them in a pact of friendship. It rocked Vila, seeing Avon naked like this, eyes brimming with humour, giggling like a man half his age, tickling and tumbling and wrestling with unrestrained gladness, stopping only at the press of hardness against his thigh.

"Mmm, you are enjoying yourself, aren't you?" he said, hands squeezing and moulding, where before they had tickled and teased. "But then, you are always so willing, so ready to share my bed with me. So sexy, Vila, so very sexy…Come on, come closer, fit yourself to me, let me love you…"

Vila lay on him, kissing frantically, deeply, breath gasping from him as Avon turned them, pressing Vila into the bed with a single hard thrust of his hips. Desperately aroused, Vila felt boneless, wrapped completely in Avon, in his passion and his love, one thread of thought singing a psan of praise to this drug that had finally given him Avon. Every other fibre of him was concentrated fiercely on Avon, and on his own body, every nerve dancing with the feeling of Avon's fingers in him, of Avon's body heavy and hot over him, the hotter, harder peak of him pressing into Vila, stroking the rimple of flesh that led, unerringly, to his arse and the hungry muscle there. He groaned, and the sound was devoured by the open mouth on his, echoed and amplified by the luxurious, guttural purrs coming from Avon. He was high as a kite on Avon's drug, as affected by Mist as Avon was himself. All his own barriers went down, knocked for six, unleashing all his carefully chained in needs and hopes.

Vila melted into the kiss, letting Avon take his weight, letting Avon support him, exhilarated by the strength of Avon's arms around him, muscle and skin and delicate hair caressing him. It's only the drug, a faint voice tried to scream in his mind, but the chant of hope drowned it deep. Mist: the lowerer of emotional inhibitions, the battering ram to break down Avon's walls. Not a brick at a time, no. Great chunks, massive boulders tumbling, leaving gaping maws behind, gates in a dam, torrents of emotion rushing through. Vila was swept up in it, willing flotsam, adding his own stream of feeling.

He was tipped onto the bed, laughter breaking them apart, joining them in a pact of friendship. It rocked Vila, seeing Avon naked like this, eyes brimming with humour, giggling like a man half his age, tickling and tumbling and wrestling with unrestrained gladness, stopping only at the press of hardness against his thigh.

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MIST

warmth, the heat matching Avon’s perfectly. He pushed up as Avon thrust down, pulling him in as deep as possible, taking all of him as Avon took him. It was glorious and delectable, and all too distracting. Moments passed before his brain heard the words whispered into his ear.

“Love you, Vila, love you…”

The words collided with the pressure of Avon’s cock inside him and he came, exploding, shattering, ass clutching Avon in, holding him, needing him, while Avon’s cum spurted from him, flooding Vila’s body as his words flooded Vila’s mind.

It took a long time for them to recover, time spent quite happily in the contented stroking of hands on languid muscle, in the murmurs of pleasure. Gradually, still held in Avon’s arms, still cocooned in Avon’s caring, Vila floated off to sleep, sparing not a single thought for mopping up or tidying tousled beds. All he would think of was Avon, of the sweet gentleness revealed by a small grey phial, of all the love unearthed… He drifted off to sweet dreams, all of them peopled by a handsome man with dark eyes and darker hair, strong hands and stronger affections. Vila was unquestionably, unquestioningly happy. Avon’s fingers stroked him, kisses were pressed to his forehead and eyes and lips, and he lay there in the warm security of his bed, gloriously, foolishly, incautiously happy.

Waking up alone disturbed him not a bit: Avon was an early riser, while Vila would cheerfully ignore Armageddon, if it meant being able to have another five minutes dreaming. He stretched, pleased with the residual languor of his limbs, smiling at the thought of Avon so good and loving and open.

“Now there’s a thought,” he said to himself, hopping out of bed and checking the wall niche. Sure enough, the cubes of Twilight were all still there, every last one of them. Vila rubbed his hands in glee, proud of himself, elated that he had finally cracked the toughest lock of them all: Kerr Avon. He had the quickest wash in history, tossed his clothes on any old how, barely taking time enough to fasten everything, not even noticing how crumpled they were and raced up to the flight deck. Checking his headlong hurry, he stopped on the threshold, entering quite circumspectly and quite in character, dismissing the voice of caution and hanging the consequences.

“Can’t take your watch, y’know.”

Involuntary curiosity was displayed by the marginal straightening of Avon’s spine.

Vila leaned forward, almost breathing in Avon’s ear. “Need to keep my strength up for tonight, don’t I?”

And before he could be denied, he turned on his heel and strode off, full of ideas to get the bedroom all set for tonight. In his starry eyed enthusiasm, he even went so far as to think of it as their bedroom. He whistled as he went on his way, confident that Avon’s chill behaviour was a mirror image of how Avon actually felt, both a reversal of his true emotions and a perfect reflection of the nervous twitches of emotion that once stoic Avon was going through. It wasn’t everyday that a cynic displayed his feelings like that. For that matter, it was hardly everyday that a cynic discovered what those feelings actually were. Small wonder the man was running scared. Vila saw no need to worry: Avon was, undeniably, an intelligent man; he would adjust, he would end up relishing the expression of the emotions as much as the love itself.

Avon hesitated, the teardrop balanced precariously in the palm of his hand. Loving the freedom and comfort this potion afforded him, he lusted after it, but there was a fear growing in him, its cancerous voice whispering warnings of dire and desperate straits Vila’s cheerful whistling drew closer, deciding him. He would hang the voice of caution and hang the consequences along with it. This openness was doing him no harm, this relaxation was…pleasant, spilling over into his dealings with the others. His tongue was just as sharp, his mind sharper still, but the viciousness born of fear was, if not quite, then at least partially, gone. He was even finding the gentler effects of the drug lingering long after the chemical had dispersed, behaviour unleashed by Mist becoming a lesson learned by his subconscious mind. Even with his choice made, his hand hesitated again, a scant instant from his lips. With Vila’s sweetly melodic whistling almost at his door, he popped the glittering greyness into his mouth, feeling it dissolve under his tongue, the familiar surge tendrilloing through the tissue of his body, hardening his body and softening his battlements.

“Only if you agree to take my watch.”

So that was how it was going to be: a reversal from the worn pattern of before. Avon would be more distant, emotionally speaking, outside of the bedroom than in it. And that suited Vila just fine. He could do without the banter, if, in its place, there was loving and the whisperings of sweet words. Anyway, as Avon became more comfortable with the revelations of the dark and Mist, the easy sharp-clawed chitchat would come back. Secure, Vila smiled, warmed inside by the memory of the night, letting Avon turn, unanswered, from him. He waited until the other man was stooped in concentration over the console before he spoke.

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Vila leaned forward, almost breathing in Avon’s ear. “Need to keep my strength up for tonight, don’t I?”

And before he could be denied, he turned on his heel and strode off, full of ideas to get the bedroom all set for tonight. In his starry eyed enthusiasm, he even went so far as to think of it as their bedroom. He whistled as he went on his way, confident that Avon’s chill behaviour was a mirror image of how Avon actually felt, both a reversal of his true emotions and a perfect reflection of the nervous twitches of emotion that once stoic Avon was going through. It wasn’t everyday that a cynic displayed his feelings like that. For that matter, it was hardly everyday that a cynic discovered what those feelings actually were. Small wonder the man was running scared. Vila saw no need to worry: Avon was, undeniably, an intelligent man; he would adjust, he would end up relishing the expression of the emotions as much as the love itself.

Avon hesitated, the teardrop balanced precariously in the palm of his hand. Loving the freedom and comfort this potion afforded him, he lusted after it, but there was a fear growing in him, its cancerous voice whispering warnings of dire and desperate straits Vila’s cheerful whistling drew closer, deciding him. He would hang the voice of caution and hang the consequences along with it. This openness was doing him no harm, this relaxation was…pleasant, spilling over into his dealings with the others. His tongue was just as sharp, his mind sharper still, but the viciousness born of fear was, if not quite, then at least partially, gone. He was even finding the gentler effects of the drug lingering long after the chemical had dispersed, behaviour unleashed by Mist becoming a lesson learned by his subconscious mind. Even with his choice made, his hand hesitated again, a scant instant from his lips. With Vila’s sweetly melodic whistling almost at his door, he popped the glittering greyness into his mouth, feeling it dissolve under his tongue, the familiar surge tendrilloing through the tissue of his body, hardening his body and softening his battlements.
The door opened and Vila, all smiles, donned through. Before he could speak, before he could even stop whistling, Avon had a good hold of him, had hands clutching his arse, fingertips pressed into the crack, mouth hard and raging in a maestrom of a kiss.

“So sexy, Vila, so very sexy,” the so familiar words were poured into his mouth. “Come on, come closer,” Avon murmured, voice hoarse and rough with desire and feeling, speaking the litany that had become so much a part of this nightly ritual, reciting the phrases that had become poetry to Vila, a whole week’s worth of ungrudged loving compounding every time he heard that breathless catch in Avon’s voice. “Fit yourself to me, let words were poured into his mouth. “Come on, come

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They stumbled to the bed, discarding clothes in haphazard haste, landing with linked limbs, tongues tangling, skin sliding so hot and sweet against the spring of hair. Words poured from Avon, raining Vila with love and lust, turning them both on, fuelling the passion. Surrendering, Avon bathed Vila’s body with his tongue, sucking on nipples, tracing the planes of muscle and the swirl of hair, frantic desire slowing to gentle adoration as Avon’s lips settled themselves around Vila’s cock. He sucked happily, tongue fibrillating on the underside, shooting pleasure hotly through the so sensitive nerves. Slowly, Avon withdrew his mouth, little noises of complaint coming from Vila, until attention was given the moistened head, the pointed tip of a tongue pressing into the slit there, tasting the first clear drops of precum, weaving them in a halo pointed tip of a tongue pressing into the slit there, tasting

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Vila gasped, thrusting up, yearning for more, knowing what was coming, the anticipation exciting him even more, the thought almost more exciting than the act. His back arched, hips lifting, shoving into Avon’s grasping, grabbing throat, lubricating himself with his own cum and Avon’s moisture. The haven was taken from him, and he found himself grinning fiercely. They flowed into a new position, not even having to think about it any more. Avon’s fierce grin matched Vila’s, both of them hungry for this, both of them high on this feeling of intense, condensed masculinity. Thumbs digging in just enough to send pain-painted pleasure coursing through his partner, Vila spread Avon’s thighs, pale skin reddening under the strength of his hands, Avon’s eyes closing under the onslaught of manhood. One hand moved up to massage the black belly hair, the other moved to squeeze tight-drawn balls. Hands clenching in the bedclothes, Avon spread himself even wider, squirming and twisting, cock bobbing up onto his belly, tapping hard against Vila’s hand.

“Ready for me, are you?”
“When am I not?”
“Want it?”

Questions, part of this affectionate game they played, chatter, slowing them down, drawing this out, spinning the web of pleasure ever larger. “Would I be here if I didn’t, idiot? Of course I want it.”


Arching body, heavy heat thrusting into tight fist, enticing. “You.” Words again, weaving the magic to cocoon them more closely, irresistible. “In me. Your cock up my arse.”

“Yeh? Want to feel me fuck you, want to feel a man in you, making you even more a man yourself? Want to take all of me in, do you, all that muscle, all that hot cum shooting up inside you, filling you up, touching you in there, in the dark, where it’s secret. Yeh, that’s it, oh, move like that, Avon, relax like that for me, let me in…”

The long, slow, sweet penetration, a single, smooth flex of muscle, a liquid surge and Vila was in him, face flushed, lifting Avon’s legs up, supporting them on his shoulders, hands rubbing the softness of hair and the hardness of quivering flesh. He caressed Avon’s legs, following the lean lines of trembling thighs, tingling in the pattern of thickening hair that led so unerringly to the dense balls and pulsing cock, the white flesh where his own red cock was planted. Avon was thrashing under him, convulsive with ecstasy, thrusting up to meet Vila’s downwards thrust, moving them in rhythm, giving the loving to both of them, making it so very, very right.

Easing down as far as he could, Vila kissed Avon deeply, fucking him with his tongue, fucking him with his cock, Avon fucking Vila’s fist, the undiluted masculinity redolent around them, an aura, the power in them feeding around in an endless circuit from cock to cock, mouth to mouth, balls to balls. They were complete, each one fulfilled, each one fulfilling, soaring on the freedom of love, unconstrained joy surging with every thrust of hips, building, growing, hurtling forward to fast while poised on the threshold, hammering against the locked door, that one last, interminable instant where pleasure becomes too great to bear. A heartbeat, a flurry of deep, pounding thrusts and Vila was coming, streaming inside Avon, the heat of him cascading Avon over with him.

The afterglow lasted a lifetime, a silence comfortable and secure settling them down to sleep, still entwined, semen pooling and cooling on uncaring flesh. All that mattered was the shared warmth, the breath of a loved one caressing skin, the calm delight of falling asleep in someone’s arms…

Vila came out of the infirmary, absenthly rubbing his stomach. The nausea was almost completely gone now, after an almost undurable four days in his—literal—sick bed. Temperature back to normal, digestive system once more beaten into submission, he hurried on towards Avon’s quarters, already half-hard at the thought
of the welcome awaiting him. Whistling Avon’s favourite song, he made a mental note to get Orac to work out a formula to manufacture Mist—Avon had taken a real liking to the stuff and at the rate he was using it, he’d have finished it before the week was out. Wouldn’t like to give up this lovely Avon for the old cynicial bastard he had known and loved. Well, more or less loved. He whistled a different tune, an old song his granny had always sung around the house. The tune faltered, losing itself, finding the key again, losing the melody. He could hear Avon. Avon speaking, saying those words. His words, words—and feelings—no one else had any right to hear.

“…so ready to share my bed with me. So sexy, so very sexy. Come here, come closer, let me love you, Blake…”

Tears strangled him, choking off what had been happy whistling, and he fled, running down corridors, running and running until he had reached the farthest recesses of the enormous ship. There was a corner there, somewhere quiet and dark and dead. Vila curled up into it, to numb with pain to really feel the anguish stealing through his soul. Only one thought grazed his mind, leaving bleeding wounds to fester in its wake.

_The drug, only the drug, no love, no love for me…_

Avon’s hands were shaking, as he stood there naked, vulnerable still even though Blake had left. To have slept with Blake… To have said those words. To have _meant_ those words of sentimentality. To be so weak, so terribly, terrifyingly needful. With Blake. Not nice, safe, warm, predictably convoluted Vila, but _Blake_… That was impossible, that was just—too much. He was too scared to even try to dredge up some more appropriate term, he just wanted to get this fearful vulnerability gone, finished. It was so tempting, to simply give in, give up so much of what made him himself, to lean on these people who loved him and whom he loved. But the dangers… He grimaced with empathic, guilty pain as his mind relentlessly replayed the broken whistle he had heard, just as he had drawn Blake into a kiss. Equally callously, his mind displayed the memory of his own unreasoning needs and passion, casting a harsh glow upon the softness of loving someone. The drug. He was sinking under its influence, being undermined from within, losing his independence, his strength, his mind. He was out of control, needing his daily fix of love that Mist made possible, addicted, he laughed bitterly at the thought, not to a drug, but to the part of himself the drug brought into dominance. Addicted so severely that four days without Vila and he was seeking that part of himself, looking for that love in Blake, finding only sex. Or terrifyingly, finding the love, the caring. The commitment.

He leaned heavily against the wall as he opened the niche, taking out the grey droplet, staring at it with dumb horror. A glistering cube was placed beside the soft greyness on his palm, and he balanced them, one against the other. On one side, lay possible—dimplly possible, he reminded himself—psychological breakdown, paranoia, loss of reality, obsessive behaviour. On another, involvement, vulnerability, pain. And as for taking neither? Unvarnished, unpadded reality. A fate far worse than anything the drugs could possibly invoke. And not even a whisper of the word ‘addict’ found its way into his mind.

He simply stood there, staring at crossroads in his life that lay on his palm, thinking of the good and bad held within each, fear making him want to run from Mist, but the delicious, warmly loving memories of Vila gave him pause. And thoughts of Blake, in his arms, around him, devastated by passion…Vila, cheerful whistle breaking, spirit fading, running, running, and Avon too hooked on his daily fix to do anything about it. Yes, with Mist lay pain, his own, too. He straightened, breathing deeply. He couldn’t manage without the buffer of a drug right now. Oh, he would, later, as soon as he decided he didn’t want to take them any longer. He was _not_ addicted. Not him. Lesser men, perhaps, but not he. He could stop any time he wanted to. He would never succumb, neither to the psychosis of Twilight nor to the weakness of Mist. Resolute, he gathered up both the Mist phials yet remaining and carried them into the bathroom, watching as they disappeared down the disposal. He felt as if a part of him was disappearing forever…

Shaking off the sentimentality to cover himself with his rediscovered independence, he strode back into his bedroom, grabbing a cube from the hidey-hole, ramming it against his arm, feeling the osmosis, feeling it surging through him intravenously, filling him, driving away the memory of Vila’s pain, of Blake’s overwhelming affections. He sighed with relief as the Twilight dispelled the Mist still in his veins, felt the old shell reharden around him, smiled. Yes, this was the right choice.

Serene now, he hauled the sheets off the bed, replacing them without a single emotional twinge, settling himself into pristine coolness, arms pillowing his head. He would be fine, now, paranoia and psychosis having no place in his well-controlled life. No, he absolutely would _not_ succumb to those dire and dread side effects much touted by stupid and self-serving Deltas. Well…not if he could survive Servalan long enough. Not if he could stop Blake betraying him…

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**MIST**

OBLAQUE IV: _to be taken intravenously_